

**To:** Hestmark, Martin[Hestmark.Martin@epa.gov]  
**From:** Ostrander, David  
**Sent:** Fri 9/18/2015 6:20:45 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Seeking R8 Decision on Response Priorities

We need to discuss and get a decision on this asap next week.

Thanks

**From:** Cristiano, Gina  
**Sent:** Friday, September 18, 2015 12:01 PM  
**To:** Ostrander, David  
**Cc:** Atencio, Kathie; Williams, Laura  
**Subject:** Seeking R8 Decision on Response Priorities

Hi David,

As mentioned, I am seeking your assistance (and Martin's, Shaun's potentially) on defining the Region's priorities regarding response work we're currently expected to fulfill.

I don't think I have to articulate the incredible amount of resources going into the GKM incident. However, it is worth noting that this same impact is being felt by Regions 9 and Regions 10, which are our back-up regions.

In addition to the GKM event, we got a mission assignment from FEMA to send people to Pine Ridge, SD for a total of one month to assist with help conduct assessments on the Pine Ridge Reservation. We have deployed two people (on 9/8 and 9/10) to assist with this and are looking for two more folks to backfill them on the second rotation. I have provided notice to the RICT on this item via three separate emails. However, PLEASE NOTE we've not had a meeting with them since all this started so we have NOT asked them to prioritize work to this point. **We are now in a position that requires a regional decision on priorities.**

We are looking for two people to deploy to Pine Ridge to assist with the FEMA MA and relieve the folks currently in the field. The deployment dates are 9/21 and 9/23 for two weeks. We have

no OSCs who can do this. They are either responding to GKM, are currently in SD or are fielding other emergencies (such as the mercury release in Utah) and some have personal limitations (surgery, etc). I have sent notice to the IMT, WERT, RTFL and general RSC membership regarding these deployments. We have received no interest and/or folks are sitting other EOY commitments and a few have personal limitations. Thus, here are the options I see:

- The region makes the determination that response to emergency incidents takes priority over other work. We would need assistance communicating this across SLT and even then we may not get people who are willing to go (?). Even if this decision is made, it is unlikely we would get this resolved in time for people to deploy on Monday and Wednesday to relieve the current field folks. We will have to let FEMA know there will be a gap in our fulfillment of the MA.
- The region makes the determination that response to emergency incidents takes priority over other work AND DIRECTS PHS officers to fill this need. I'm told they cannot say no if given the order. This would ensure relief is in place for the folks currently in SD and we fulfill the MA but surely the PHS folks will not be happy.
- We could reach out to our backup regions and/or seek national assistance. However, our backup regions are already strapped by GKM, typhoons and other incidents. This means we'll likely have to seek help on a national scale. Several other regions are now dealing with the upcoming Papal visit. Not only is this option complicated given these other incidents, we would still have a gap in our fulfillment of the MA. I also think there is some **political considerations** with this – we probably should not seek outside assistance without implementing the items above first. If this MA is high enough priority to fill, we should try all avenues to fill it internally before we go to other regions (my two cents).
- We could tell FEMA this is not an agency priority and that we will not/cannot fulfill the remaining MA.

Please let me know how to proceed. I'm happy to reach out to senior mgmt. or the RICT or FEMA, just need the word/support to do it.

Many thanks, Gina

Gina Cristiano

Emergency Response & Planning Coordinator

EPA Region 8

303-312-6688